



June 1, 2000

Ms. Tenley A. Aldredge
Assistant County Attorney
County of Travis
P. O. Box 1748
Austin, Texas 78767

OR2000-2146

Dear Ms. Aldredge:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 137027.

Travis County (the "county") received a request for a copy of the file regarding a specified individual and cause number. You assert that you have released all of the court documents. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.108(a)(2) excepts from disclosure information concerning an investigation that concluded in a result other than conviction or deferred adjudication. You assert that the prosecution of the defendant did not result in conviction or deferred adjudication. Therefore, we agree that section 552.108(a)(2) is applicable and you may withhold the submitted information.¹

However, section 552.108 is inapplicable to basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. Gov't Code § 552.108(c). We believe such basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle Publishing Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177, 185 (Tex. Civ. App.--Houston [14th Dist.], writ ref'd per curiam, 536

¹Because you may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2), we need not address section 552.108 and prosecutorial work product or section 552.101 and criminal history record information and medical records. Further, we need not address the jury panel records.

assert that section 552.101 of the Government Code and common law privacy protects the identity of the sexual assault victim. The doctrine of common law privacy protects information that contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts about a person's private affairs such that its release would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person and the information must be of no legitimate concern to the public. *Industrial Found. v. Texas Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 683-85 (Tex. 1976), *cert. denied*, 430 U.S. 931 (1977). Any information tending to identify sexual assault victims must be withheld pursuant to common law privacy. See Open Records Decision No. 393 (1983). Therefore, you must withhold the victim's identifying information. You have the discretion to release all or part of the remaining information that is not otherwise confidential by law. Gov't Code § 552.007.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other records or any other circumstances.

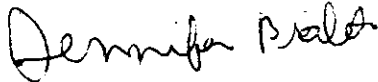
This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, within 10 calendar days of this ruling, the governmental body will do one of the following three things: 1) release the public records; 2) notify the requestor of the exact day, time, and place that copies of the records will be provided or that the records can be inspected; or 3) notify the requestor of the governmental body's intent to challenge this letter ruling in court. If the governmental body fails to do one of these three things within 10 calendar days of this ruling, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at 877/673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Department of Public Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.--Austin 1992, no writ).

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Bialek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jennifer" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bialek".

Jennifer Bialek
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JHB/ljp

Ref: ID# 137027

Encl. Submitted documents

cc: Ms. Cindy Henley
8314 Bo Jack
Houston, Texas 77040-1535
(w/o enclosures)